

CHURCH HISTORY

Chapter 33 – Arminianism and the Quakers

1. *Departures from Historic Protestantism*
 - a. *Quakerism teaches that, in addition to His revelation in His Word as recorded in the Bible, God still grants revelation today to individual believers*
 - b. *Arminianism while maintaining the doctrine of salvation by faith alone, stresses man's will at the expense of God's sovereignty,*
2. *Jacobus Arminius*
 - a. *Arminianism received its name from a man named Arminius, who was born in the Netherlands, in 1560*
 - b. *In his lectures his departure from historic Calvinism became more and more noticeable, although he retained his belief in the Trinity, the deity of Christ, and salvation by faith in Christ's atoning work on the cross*
 - c. *He made God's election depend on the action of man*
 - d. *He also taught that Christ died for all men, and that it is possible to fall from grace. He denied that the work of the Spirit is irresistible*
3. *The Synod of Dort*
 - a. *To settle the questions in dispute a synod was held in Dort from November 13, 1618, to May 9, 1619; The Synod of Dort was the greatest synod of Reformed churches ever held*
 - b. *The Synod unanimously rejected and very positively condemned the teachings of the Arminians, and stated the true Reformed doctrine in the Canons of Dort. The formulation of the Canons of Dort is the high-water mark in the creed-making of the Reformed churches*
 - c. *The Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and these Canons of Dort are to this day the creeds or doctrinal standards of the Reformed churches in the Netherlands and America*
4. *Arminianism Lives On*
 - a. *There is still today a small group of Arminian (or Remonstrant, as they were also called)*
 - b. *John Wesley adopted Arminianism, and it became the creed of the Wesleyan Methodists*
5. *George Fox, Founder of the Quakers*
 - a. *In England the seventeenth century was a time of unrest and change. This period produced some remarkable characters, one of whom was George Fox, the originator of Quakerism*
 - b. *Practically the only book he knew anything about was the Bible. In the England of that day there was much religious insincerity and unreality among church people. The soul of Fox thirsted for truth and sincerity in religion*
6. *Fox's Teachings*
 - a. *he believed that the Bible remains a closed book unless the mind of man is illumined by the Holy Spirit; Fox called this illumination by the Spirit the Inner Light; The first name of the people who accepted the teachings of Fox was "Children of Truth" but later called "Children of Light."*
 - b. *They believed that something within them told them what was right and what was wrong. That something within them drew them away from the false to the true, from the low to the high, from the impure to the pure. They called it "Christ's Light." Not only did it give illumination to mind and heart, it also gave life and power and joy. Therefore they called it the "Seed of God."*
 - c. *Fox had no use whatsoever for any of the existing churches, nor for their creeds or their theology. He did not believe in theological schools, in formal training for the ministry, or in engaging professional ministers.*
 - d. *They were called Quakers by people not belonging to them probably as Fox once said, to "tremble at the Word of the Lord." Or followers of Fox trembled with emotion when they were assembled in their meetinghouses*
 - e. *They call themselves Friends from the "Society of Friends" from the Gospel of John "I have called you friends,"*
 - f. *Their meetinghouses are exceedingly plain. There is no pulpit. They do not sing. There are no musical instruments. They sit down and wait in silence for the Spirit to move them. If there is no moving by the Spirit within a certain length of time, they leave without a word having been spoken.*
 - g. *The Friends do not believe in oaths or war. They believe and act on the principle that kindness produces kindness.*
 - h. *Friends show their firm belief in divine guidance; they will often wait in silence for guidance in daily problems and decisions. Quaker respect for the dignity and value of all people led William Penn to deal fairly with the Indians, prevented their supporting any war, made them leaders in the agitation against slavery, and made them famous for their relief work in wars and disasters.*
7. *The Quakers Increase Numbers*
 - a. *In 1654 there were sixty Quakers. Four years later there were thirty thousand; They were severely persecuted, but their numbers continued to grow. Possessed of an ardent missionary zeal, they went to Europe, Africa, and America, everywhere proclaiming the ideas of George Fox*
 - b. *They distinguished themselves by a peculiar mode of dress*